(c) if not, the alternative steps taken to over come the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) is a decontrolled fertilizer and its availability is decided by market forces of demand and supply. Due to reduced production as well as imports by the traditional fertilizer companies producing/importing DAP, State Governments have been requested to get balance supply of DAP from Indian Potash Limited/MMTC Limited on payment of Maximum Retail Price less dealers margin and to arrange for its distribution within the State through their marketing federations. Amount so advanced by the State Government will be recouped through realisation of its sale. The State Trading Agencies have already finalised import of the full requirement of DAP as estimated by various State Governments for both the current Kharif as well as the ensuing Rabi season.

Closure of units in FACT

40. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the various plants of FACT is closed down due to the enhancement of price of raw—material in international market; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken to start the production in FACT, Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Recently, it was reported by the management of FACT, that the Caprolactam-Ammoniam Sulphate plant has been temporarily closed down due to abnormal increase in the price of raw materials in the international market. However, the complex fertilizer (NPK) plant of FACT is still operational.

(b) A special financial dispensation proposal for FACT is under active consideration of the Government.

Village Grain Bank Scheme in Maharashtra

41. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maharashtra Government has submitted a proposal regarding revised Village Grain Bank Scheme, dated 24th March, 2006;

(b) if so, whether the Chief Minister also reminded in a communication dated 18th September, 2006 with the Agriculture Minister about the scheme;

(c) whether Government have raised any queries regarding this issue and if so, when the information was received from the State Government; and

(d) if so, what is the latest decision and by what time the final decision in this regard is going to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government of Maharashtra was asked to furnish details in respect of Village Grain Banks established out of those sanctioned to them earlier, during the years 2001-02 and 2003-04. These were received in this Ministry on 23.1.2007.

(d) The Department of Food and Public Distribution sanctioned 1111 and 266 Village Grain Banks for establishment in Maharashtra State on 5.3.2007 and 30.3.2007 respectively.

Status of foodgrain stocks

†42. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of various foodgrain stocks including wheat, rice, pulses, edible oils, sugar, etc., as on date in the country;

(b) whether the storage of the said items is not as per the requirement of storage criteria;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure proper arrangements of storage keeping in view of the shortage of stocks of said items in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) The stocks of wheat and rice as on 1.8.2007 in the Central Pool is as under;-

Commodity	Quantity (Lakh tonnes)
Wheat	120.19
Rice	91.65

As per the information available with the Department of Food & Public Distribution, sugar stock in the country on 1.7.07 was 176.38 lakh tonnes. Government does not maintain stock of edible oils and pulses in the Central Pool.

The existing buffer stock norms applicable for foodgrains (Rice and Wheat) are as given below:

(Lakh tonnes)

	Wheat	Rice	Total
1st April	40	122	162
1st July	171	98	269
1st October	110	52	162
1st January	82	118	200

Against this the position of stocks of foodgrains as on 1st July, 2007 was as under:

(Lakh tonnes)

Commodity	Actual stock	Required under buffer stock norms
Wheat	129.27	171.00
Rice	109.76	98.00

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.